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SUBJECT: SENEGAL MARITIME SECURITY

11. (SBU) Summary: Following meetings with senior officials of the Senegalese Armed Forces, the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Post concludes that Senegal's maritime security remains sparse. The Senegalese Navy is among the largest in West Africa yet does not have the capability to maintain surveillance over its EEZ or reliably patrol the entirety of its coastline. This leaves their waters unprotected and provides an unobstructed sea-route for traffickers. End Summary.

12. (SBU) Meetings were held with the Senegalese Chief of Naval Operations, Captain Jean Francois Baptiste Faye, the head of the West African Office of UNODC, Regional Representative Antonio Mazzitelli, the senior military advisor from UNOWA, Colonel Walter Stoffel, and the Senegalese Gendarmerie G2. Discussions focused on how to reduce clandestine migration, primary drug trade routes through coastal waters, the inability of West African states to both maintain situational awareness at sea and actively interdict traffickers, and the inability to detect narcotics at West African ports. The facts, assumptions, and opinions of the different agencies did not vary greatly.

12. (SBU) Post's assessment on clandestine migration is that overall activity has decreased due to the combined effects of the global recession, tougher legislation by European and Senegalese authorities against illegal immigration and human-trafficking, outreach and education programs, and FRONTEX's (European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union) increased enforcement efforts. Open sources report that Senegalese in the diaspora are returning home due to their inability to sustain a higher quality of life abroad and still send remittance payments. While stories about clandestine migration and human trafficking are hardly seen in national newspapers and no longer seem to be the focus of public attention, there is a danger that immigration smugglers could shift to narcotics trafficking in an effort to make up for loss of demand for human smuggling. According to UNODC, there is no hard evidence that links specific West African criminal organizations to Latin American drug dealers. However, Latin American drug dealers are widely believed to use local criminal networks to facilitate transportation onward to Europe. Latin Americans could use groups of former human-traffickers, who are well-experienced at infiltrating European coastal waters, as an alternate or even primary means of transporting their product to its final market. So far, the only demonstrated ties are between apprehended clandestine migrants and human mules or local cocaine retailers. Clandestine migrants have been caught with relatively small amounts of cocaine; no more than 1-2 kilograms. It is believed that they used the cocaine as a form of currency because it is easier to transport than bulky cash and is easily safeguarded when ingested.

¶3. The Cape Verdean Minister of Defense recently told the UNODC Regional Representative, that she believes 20 percent of the world's cocaine transits through or very near her coastal waters. This is in line with a previous INL report that states 25 percent of world cocaine passes through West Africa. The key point of this comment is that she believes the majority of cocaine trafficked through West Africa is via sea-going vessel. Thus far, UNODC, UNOWA-Mil, EU, and ECOWAS lack hard evidence to prove her hypothesis but it would be the most cost-effective mode of transportation for Latin American drug dealers. Sea-going vessels can carry several times more product than aircraft and hundreds more than human mules. Moreover, it has been easier to hide bulk cocaine entering at European ports, which until this past year, did not consider West African sea containers as "high-risk."

¶4. The overall assessment by Mazzitelli, is that drug trafficking can never be entirely defeated but can be diminished or severely disrupted to an acceptable level. He argues that rule of law must exist to a certain degree in order for an individual state to be successful in countering narcotics trafficking whereas drug traffickers want a certain amount of state instability to be able to maintain influence over key governmental leaders and facilitate their operations. Rule of law will never return to a state overrun by drug trafficking. The UNODC regional representative argues that drug traffickers must be denied access to their preferred West African and European seaports and that they must be interdicted at sea so that they no longer have a routine or primary corridor. He went on to say that this will make coordination and logistics so difficult that they cannot maintain a reliable system of distribution and that it would force traffickers to adopt riskier

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means of distribution until cocaine sales become unprofitable. This also aids individual states by preventing them from becoming completely overwhelmed and totally corrupted by the drug trade. He also maintained that states and their people must understand the risk that drugs and trafficking pose to their countries and have the political will to fight against them.

¶5. Comment. Counter-narcotics operations alone will not return rule of law to a state but certain measures can reduce the negative impacts that are inherent to drug-trafficking. Post agrees with Mazzitelli that more must be done to disrupt the operations of drug traffickers using West Africa as a platform to ship to Europe. The drug trade will exacerbate corruption, undermine democracy, weaken the rule of law, and ultimately result in regional instability. Preventing this will require facilitating the development of states' judicial processes from investigation and apprehension to prosecution, conviction, and incarceration. Post is working with INL and USAFRICOM to develop counter-narcotics strategies for Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, as a part of the larger regional effort being led by INL. Additionally, the increased presence of U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard vessels and immediate implementation of the Maritime Security Capability Enhancement (MSCE) project will boost West African security and help regional states deter traffickers from using their littoral waters with impunity. End Comment.  
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